



Sun Lakes Republican Club

Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer

Tuesday, April 13, 2010

Let me begin by mentioning how sad I was to learn of the passing of Sandy Doty.

I know what a treasure she was to all of us – to her family – to the Republican Party – to Arizona.

She was supposed to greet me here today, but I know SHE is now being greeted in a far better place, and we will miss her.

Wilford Drinkwine, believed his country needed him during World War II.

He moved his young son and his wife, Edna, halfway across America for a job in the Nevada desert, working at the country's largest Navy munitions depot.

I was born a couple of years later.

But, years of breathing poisonous fumes around harsh chemicals, finally took his life. Wilford Drinkwine was my father. I was 11 years old.

The challenges my mother, my brother, and I were about to face were daunting.

For an 11-year-old, they were terrifying.

But, my mother taught me how to deal with those challenges – she met them head-on. She opened a dress shop and she went to work, 10 hours a day, 7 days a week.

I worked right beside her, every day after school and on weekends.

My mother didn't complain about counting every penny or being a widow with two children.

When life got hard, she worked harder. She never quit.

Let me tell you something: Edna Drinkwine died at the age of 87 – and she was my inspiration -- each and every day.

From her, I learned to make hard choices.

She taught me the value of action -- that if you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem.

She taught me to honor our country.

She taught me that the only thing you're entitled to in life, is a chance.

And, she taught me that you're measured by how you MEET challenges. She was right, of course.

I've thought of that every day for the past year, every day since I was challenged with the opportunity to become your Governor.

I say "challenged," because for five high-rolling years before I took office, the system grew government as large as possible.

I faced a state budget deficit of nearly five billion dollars across two fiscal years.

I faced a federal government whose unfunded mandates and sweetheart deals were stealing Arizona's freedom and threatening to bankrupt our state.

Well, I am my mother's daughter.

I am up to this challenge.

I am a problem solver.

When I began as Chairman of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, I encountered a local government bogged down so deeply in debt that it had utilized one hundred and sixty five million dollars in short-term borrowing -- just to meet cash flow.

At the end of my tenure in 2002, I left Maricopa County in one of the strongest financial positions of any county in the nation.

The financial turnaround was so good, that *Governing Magazine* proclaimed Maricopa County "one of the two best managed large counties in the nation."

The Arizona Comeback began in earnest when I fought for – and won -- thanks to the help of courageous members of both parties in the State Senate and the State House – the right of the VOTERS to decide whether to raise the state sales tax by 1 percent over the next three years.

I've NEVER voted to raise taxes in my entire career.

Not once in 28 years in public service. Not one time!

But, I've learned one thing above all else: Doing the RIGHT thing, almost always means doing the HARD thing.

That's how I feel about Proposition 100. As hard as it is to do, I will be a "YES" vote come Election Day.

I'm voting "YES" because it's the right thing to do, and I strongly encourage you to vote "YES" as well.

IF we are to preserve the core functions of the Arizona we all love ...

-- IF we want to keep funding Arizona's K-12 education system at reasonable levels to keep class sizes manageable so teachers have time to spend with students to help them learn ...

– IF we want to help our universities and community colleges -- faced with tuition increases of 15, 18, and 20 percent ...

– IF we want to keep felons locked up ...

-- and IF we want to aid Arizona's poorest families with the help they desperately need ... then Proposition 100 MUST pass!

I emphasize, this is a TEMPORARY tax.

It will start on June 1st of this year, and come to a DEAD STOP at the end of the day on May 31, 2013 -- when it's automatically repealed from the law books.

This is not a cure-all.

But, the tax will get us through until revenues recover -- so that education does not bear the brunt of the downturn.

To those who stand in opposition to this tax – those who claim their opposition is based on conservative principles, let me remind you that when Ronald Reagan was elected Governor of California in 1966, he discovered the California budget had been built on a house of cards -- a Ponzi scheme -- designed to let politicians take credit for spending NOW and forcing OTHERS to worry about the consequences LATER.

Vast amounts of debt and accounting gimmicks -- coupled with a huge expansion in permanent spending and government programs -- had left California and its new Governor with a financial crisis -- and a state budget near collapse.
Sound familiar?

No one can challenge the conservative credentials of perhaps one of the greatest presidents of the 20th Century.

Yet, he confronted the insurmountable state budget crisis by proposing and ratifying a tax increase.

Ronald Reagan had a good, PRAGMATIC conservative plan.

And, so do I.

We've already curbed the Regulatory State – my first official act as governor was to order a moratorium on state regulations.

I'm committed to restoring stability, predictability, and reliability to state government.

-- I've launched a Jobs Action Team

-- I'm committing ten million dollars of my discretionary funding -- through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 -- to establish a Job Training Assistance Program.

-- I'm focused on a combination of regulatory and tax reforms.

-- For the long-term, we're re-thinking areas of our tax structure that unduly burden our employers -- particularly those requiring large capital investments, such as manufacturing.

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Last summer, I signed legislation creating the Renewable Energy Tax Incentive Program. Companies are interested -- and they are coming to Arizona.

-- Suntech Power Holdings.

-- Tower Automotive.

-- Stirling Energy Systems.

... Are all part of Arizona's growing solar landscape ...

... and Bell Independent Power announced it will build a five mega-watt solar plant at the University of Arizona Tech Park -- including a first of its kind thermal storage system.

So, you tell me, are we starting to win?

You bet we are.

We've attracted well over one billion dollars in capital -- twenty-five new companies or expansion projects -- yielding quality growth with more than twenty-four-hundred jobs.

And, we've done much more:

-- "Operation Clean Sweep" has inmates picking up trash along our highways.

-- Our ArizonaSERVES Task Force is coordinating statewide volunteer efforts with faith-based and community organizations assisting those in need in our communities.

-- My Commission on Privatization and Efficiency is identifying state services and agencies whose functions can be eliminated, consolidated, streamlined or outsourced to achieve greater operational efficiency in meeting the needs of our citizens.

-- With regard to border security, I am not taking "No," for an answer from the federal government. Arizona roads and open spaces have become thoroughfares for illegal alien traffic and smuggling operations — drugs, arms and humans. Recently, an Arizona rancher in southeastern Cochise County was shot and killed, with evidence suggesting the crime was part of border-related criminal activity.

I visited the area, and I've seen firsthand what needs to be done.

I've written President Obama and repeated my numerous requests for additional troops.

I will NOT accept the notion that border security is a responsibility of the Border States.

-- So, we're now transferring back to the Federal Government non-violent criminal aliens housed in the Department of Corrections, saving Arizona taxpayers thousands of dollars.

-- Recently, I announced that on behalf of the State of Arizona, I was joining fifteen other states who have filed a lawsuit in federal court challenging the constitutionality of the Health Care legislation.

At my request, the Arizona Legislature passed a law in special session permitting me to challenge Congress's unconstitutional action.

With its onerous federal mandate, Congress has exceeded its authority and left Arizona no option but to challenge its unconstitutional act in federal court.

Health Care regulation is a power reserved to the STATES by the 10th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Congress has OVERREACHED by requiring individuals to purchase health insurance -- and penalizing them if they don't.

We MUST join this suit to ensure Arizona has a voice in the court actions. This is just too important for our State to sit back and do nothing.

So, tell me, aren't these steps in the right direction?

But, wait, there's more:

-- We've protected the Sanctity of Life.

-- We've supported Arizona as a Right-to-Work State.

-- We've done away with Political Correctness -- returning Christmas and Hanukah to the Capitol.

-- We've protected Second Amendment Rights

-- We've brought traditional values back to our young people, restoring abstinence-only sex education in our schools.

-- And we've supported traditional marriage.

Now, I'm not aiming to please everyone.

I AM aiming to lead this Arizona Comeback -- to win the future for our children and grandchildren.

Wilford and Edna Drinkwine were common Americans, but they were the whole world to me. They worked hard, asked for nothing in return, and made silent sacrifices for the common good.

I am their proud daughter who understands that the call to public service is higher than any partisan purpose.

I am restoring Arizona – committed to its comeback -- based on our common values, cultivated in the soil of self-sacrifice.

Abraham Lincoln said, (Quote) “The struggle of today is not altogether FOR today; it is for a vast FUTURE also. With a reliance on Providence, all the more firm and earnest, let us proceed in the great task which events have placed upon us.” (Unquote)

So, let us proceed in the great task of making Arizona our STRONG AND SHINING HOME.

Thank you. God bless you and your families, and may God bless this great state of Arizona.